



HOMEWORDS: A Project of the Poet Laureate of Kansas

By Wyatt Townley

This week our topic is **home as land**, a favorite among many Kansas poets. We'll use the American Cinquain as our spade—22 syllables divided among 5 lines in this way: 2, 4, 6, 8, 2.

Both our poets explore the earth—what's under, in, and on it. **Eric McHenry** is a fifth-generation Topekan who teaches at Washburn University. He's published three books of poems, and his work has appeared widely in *The Harvard Review*, *Slate*, *Poetry Northwest*, *The New York Times Book Review*, and *Salon*.

*Ancient
square of sidewalk
shoved skyward by the root
of the pin oak Granddad planted
leans me.*

Deborah Wilson lives in Overland Park where she works on short stories and poetry. She hopes to finish a novel before she dies. "I write because my little Grandma told me that I should write. She lived in a log cabin in Potosi, Missouri, and was my first pen pal."

*Your grave
is dense red clay
under the shady oak
where I have often found turtles
at rest.*

Poets and poets-to-be of all ages from across the state are invited to submit to *Home Words*. For guidelines, visit www.kansashumanities.org.

The Kansas Humanities Council is a nonprofit organization that supports community-based cultural programs and encourages Kansans to engage in the civic and cultural life of their communities.



Poet Eric McHenry,
Topeka



Poet Deborah
Wilson, Overland
Park